

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 19931 221804Z
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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3710

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY DOHA

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 19931

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MASS, IZ

SUBJ: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON GULF SECURITY

DISCUSSIONS

REF. STATE 156769

1. WE HAD DISCUSSED FLORA LEWIS ARTICLE WITH LOCAL PRESS SOURCES KNOWLEDGEABLE IN MIDDLE EAST MATTERS AND THE SUBJECT ALSO AROSE IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH QUAI OFFICIALS WITH RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AREA. PRESS SOURCES WERE AT A LOSS AS TO WHAT INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN PARIS COULD HAVE LED LEWIS TO THE CONCLUSION THAT A GULF SECURITY PACT MIGHT BE IN THE OFFING. QUAI OFFICIALS WERE SIMILARLY UNAWARE THAT THE IDEA OF A PACT MIGHT HAVE COME ALIVE AGAIN.

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PAGE 02 PARIS 19931 221804Z

2. ON THE SPECIFICS OF THE STORY WHICH MIGHT HAVE LED LEWIS TO HER CONCLUSION, IT IS TRUE THAT THE GOF HAS A CONTINUING INTEREST IN ARMS SALES TO IRAQ WHICH THEY JUSTIFY AS GIVING IRAQ A WESTERN ALTERNATIVE WHICH COULD EVENTUALLY LEAD TO LOOSENING OF TIES WITH THE USSR. IN THIS CONNECTION, FRENCH DEFMINT BOURGES IS PRESENTLY ON AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO IRAQ AND THERE

IS PRESS SPECULATION OF ARMS SALES BEING CONCLUDED.
DAUSSAULT AVIATION (MIRAGE) OFFICIALS HAVE RECENTLY
BEEN IN BAGHDAD.

3. FRENCH OFFICIALS HAVE FOLLOWED WITH INTEREST
RECENT DIFFICULTIES IN IRAQI-SOVIET RELATIONS AND
HAVE SPECULATED THAT THIS COULD LEAD TO A WIDENING OF
THE IRAQI OPENING TO THE WEST INCLUDING AN APPROACH
TO THE US FOR BETTER RELATIONS. THEY NOTE, HOWEVER,
THAT THE DISPUTE WITH THE SOVIETS HAS APPARENTLY
CALMED DOWN IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS OR SO AND THINK THIS
MAY BE RELATED TO REPORTS THEY HAVE HAD OF A SECRET
HIGH-LEVEL SOVIET VISIT TO BAGHDAD.

4. IN SUM, WE HAVE NO INDICATIONS HERE THAT THERE HAS
BEEN A CHANGE IN THE SITUATION PREVIOUSLY REPORTED
BY AREA POSTS TO THE EFFECT THAT WHEN THE THREE MAJOR
GULF STATES TALK ABOUT GULF SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS THEY
ARE TALKING ABOUT VERY DIFFERENT THINGS.

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